

## City of Wylie Public Information Office

## **MEDIA ADVISORY**

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## Wylie Fire Rescue to Burn Rooms, Teach Forensic Fire Investigation

Cameras to Capture Interior Footage of Live Burn

WHAT: Wylie Fire Rescue is hosting a train-the-trainer Fire Dynamics class, presented by Greg Gorbett, associate professor at Eastern Kentucky University's College of Justice and Safety. Firefighters will burn three identical 12-X-12-foot rooms, outfitted with the same furnishings and fixtures, to study fire dynamics including behavior, heat transfer, and pre- and post-flashover conditions. Actual thermocouple live data capture and physical scene examination

Wylie Fire Marshal Steve Seddig, who serves as president of the Collin County Fire and Arson Investigators Association, organized the course and facilitated Gorbett's participation. Participants will include experienced fire, law enforcement or private sector instructors committed to delivering the student version of the course in their communities.

elements will be included in the training, as cameras go from flashover to infrared to black.

Seddig noted that forensic fire investigation is becoming increasingly important. As an illustration, Cameron Willingham was executed by lethal injection in February 2004 for setting fire to his home in Corsicana, killing his three daughters. Four years earlier, Ernest Willis was sentenced to death for setting a fire that killed two women in Iraan, Texas. Both men claimed they were innocent of the murders, but arson investigations led to their convictions.

Willis was freed after a state judge heard new evidence pointing to his innocence. A five-member panel, including some of the nation's leading arson experts, stated in a 2006 report that neither fire in these two cases was arson – after one man had been executed. "The need for sophisticated fire investigation methods and data cannot be overemphasized," Seddig said.

This training is funded in part by the Texas Forensic Science Commission, an organization formed in 2005 by the Texas Legislature and charged with improving the quality of forensic analysis. Contact Seddig at Steve.Seddig@wylietexas.gov to register for the training.

**WHEN:** Oct. 13 - 15, 2014

Registration 7:30 am; training 8 am to 5:30 pm

**WHO:** Firefighters, private sector instructors, investigators

**WHERE:** Wylie Fire Station 2

555 Country Club Rd. Wylie, Texas 75098

About Wylie -- Incorporated in 1887, the City of Wylie is located just 24 miles from downtown Dallas in Collin, Dallas and Rockwall Counties. Possessing an outstanding school district, a low crime rate, an ISO #1 rating and an expanding business climate, Wylie (population 44,158) is one of the fastest growing communities in the State of Texas with a 192% increase since 2000.